

REMARKS

Claims 2, 4-13, and 16-20 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3, and 14-15 were canceled. Claims 2, 4, 6, 9, 13, 16, 19, and 20 were amended. Reconsideration of the remaining claims is respectfully requested.

In the September 22, 2004 Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 6-8, 14-15, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102, but found claims 4-5, 9-13, 16-18, and 20 to contain allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the Examiner objected to claims 4-5, 9-13, 16-18, and 20 for being dependent upon rejected base claims. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indicating claims 4-5, 9-13, 16-18, and 20 to contain allowable subject matter.

In response the Examiner's objection, Applicants have amended allowable claims 4, 9, 13, 16, and 20 to place these claims in independent form. The originally-filed independent claims that were rejected by the Examiner were canceled by Applicants, and the remaining dependent claims were amended, where necessary, to make those claims dependent on allowable claims. Applicants thus respectfully submit that all currently pending claims in the application, as amended, are in condition for immediate allowance.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

DATE: 23 Sep 2004

Respectfully submitted,



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